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ABSTRACT

This workbook was developed to help adult literacy students learn about health care resources in order to know how to keep themselves healthy, when they need to see a health professional, and where to go if they do need to see someone. It contains information sheets, student worksheets, and answers to the worksheets. The information sheets are coordinated with an available audiotape. Some of the topics covered in the workbook are the following: entering the health care system; understanding different levels of health care and choosing the best level; knowing the rights and responsibilities of patients and health professionals; forming good health behaviors and using the right health care resources; and knowing where health care resources are in your community, and what they do. Three appendixes provide information on New York State Offices of Mental Health, various types of self-examination procedures, and New York State health care proxy laws; a glossary lists 23 terms that are underlined in the workbook. (KC)

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HEALTH PROMOTION FOR ADULT LITERACY STUDENTS

*An Empowering
Approach*

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Health Care Resources: You are the Consumer

STUDENT WORKBOOK

The University of the State of New York • The State Education Department
Bureau of Continuing Education Program Development • Albany, New York 12230



Important

What you are about to learn should **not** be used in place of attention from a health professional or other expert.

This workbook and tape contain the most current information available. The New York State Education Department, the Hudson River Center for Program Development, Inc., and the authors do not assume responsibility for the correctness or completeness of the information.

If you have any questions, talk to your teacher or get more information from someone who works in the health field.

Please start the tape now.

Health Care Resources: You are the Consumer

This workbook is to help you learn about health care resources, so that you know how to keep yourself healthy, when you might need to see a health professional, and where to go if you do need to see someone. You and your teacher can decide the best way for you to learn this: either working on your own with the cassette, or learning from your teacher with the rest of the class.

If working on your own with the cassette is best for you, the first step is to talk to your teacher about when it's available. When you have the tape and are ready to begin, find a well-lit room, a comfortable chair, and a steady writing surface.

I'll be saying exactly what is on the pages of your workbook so that you can read along with me. If you would like to listen to a certain section again, or need to think for a minute, feel free to stop the tape at anytime. In the workbook, you will see certain words underlined. These are words that are explained in the glossary. If you are still unsure about what the word means, ask your teacher to help you.

You will hear a "BEEP" after I give you instructions. Stop the tape after the beep, so that you can work on the exercises. Don't be nervous about them. They will help you remember what you have learned. If you have trouble with the answers, you can either review the section again by yourself, or ask your teacher for help. You should also talk with your teacher about your progress. Your teacher is there to help you, even if you just need to talk with someone about where to find health care.



What's the first thing you think of when you hear "health care?" We used to picture a male doctor in a white coat with a stethoscope, offering a bottle of pills. These days, the picture is different. There are lots of choices for health care providers and different kinds of treatments. With all of these choices, how do we know what's best for us? And, even more importantly, how do we get what we need?

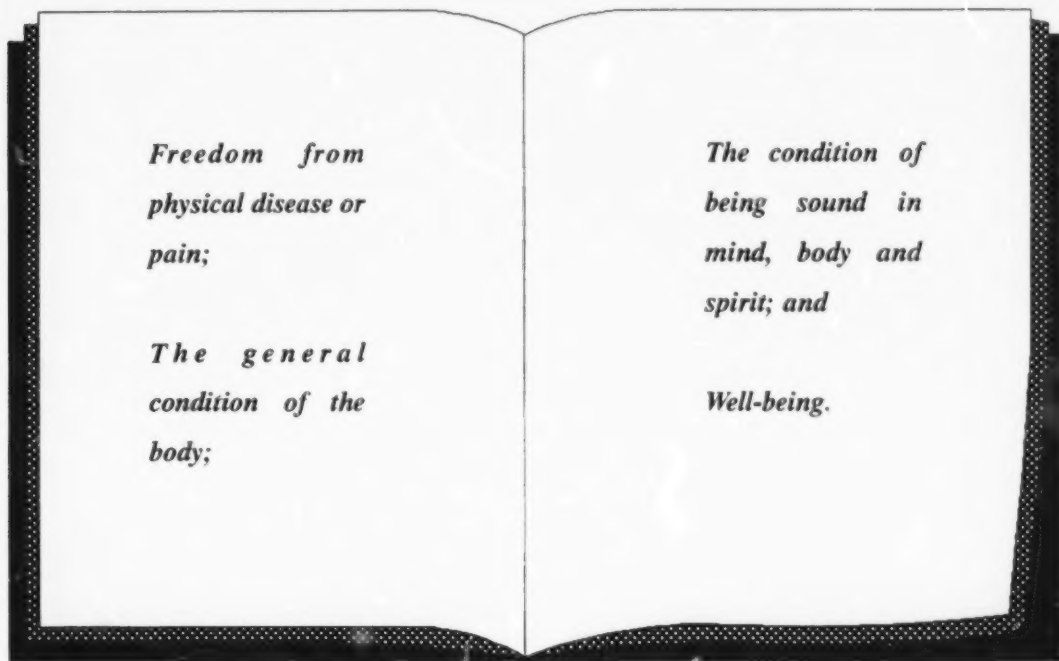
This workbook will help you answer these questions. It will tell you about types of health care available, how to decide when to get help from a health professional, and how to get help once you've decided you need it. This information can help improve the overall health of both you and your family.

After completing this workbook, you will be able to:

- ▶ Enter the health care system.
- ▶ Understand different levels of health care and choose the best level for you.
- ▶ Know the rights and responsibilities of patients and health professionals.
- ▶ Know that forming good health behaviors and using the right health care resources are your own responsibility.
- ▶ Name where health care resources are in your community, and what they do.

Before starting to sort out the health care system, let's explore the real meaning of "health," because what you believe and expect will make a difference in your health care from now on.

There are many meanings of health. Webster's Dictionary lists four different meanings:



*Freedom from
physical disease or
pain;*

*The general
condition of the
body;*

*The condition of
being sound in
mind, body and
spirit; and*

Well-being.

Everybody's talking about health today. Not long ago, health was only a problem when someone was sick or hurt, and when physical disease or pain seemed to come on suddenly. In time, health has come to mean our overall condition, even when we're not sick, and it doesn't mean just physical wellness. We know there are important links between our bodies and our thoughts and feelings, our environment at home and at work, and our personal beliefs and sense of who we are. All of these combine to build a complete healthy person, or to create "holistic" health.



Thomas Edison said, "The doctor of the future will give no medicine, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease." Today, we talk about how health can be a positive and active state of well-being that our own actions affect. Health has a different meaning for each of us, depending on who we are and what we do and see in our lives.

*Please stop the tape at the beep and complete **Worksheet #1** on the next page.*

* * *

Health Care Resources: You Are the Consumer

4

WORKSHEET #1

Wellness Scale

Extremely
Sick

Extremely
Healthy

Mark some different points along the wellness line and tell where you would be at each point.
Example: if you were extremely sick, would you be in the hospital? Do you think "extremely well" means being able to run a marathon or not having a disease?

Now mark where you are on the wellness scale. What do you do now to keep yourself healthy?
What specific steps can you take to improve your health?

We each deal with our health in a way most comfortable to us. Some of us see health in the hands of someone like a health professional, family member, nurse, or spiritual healer. Others want to learn all we can to meet the health care needs of ourselves and our families. Our own sense of ownership, control, and understanding all support good health.



We are also affected by society and by the huge advances in health care today. For example, antibiotics and immunizations brought quick fixes to fatal and common illnesses. Other things like organ transplants made health care seem almost magical.



As we learn more about health care, we hear complaints about costs, quality, and the trouble with getting health care. Remember that you are a "consumer," or buyer of health care. The health care provider works for you and is paid for a service that fills your needs. Therefore, the health care provider answers to you, like you answer to your boss. The relationship between you and your health care provider is partly a business one which serves the customer (you), and partly a partnership working to meet your needs as a patient.

Speaking of needs, there are many different types of health needs. You should figure out your own and your family's needs. There are many ways to think about and sort out health care needs. You can think about special conditions like cancer or heart disease, or you can think about groups of people like children, older people, or pregnant women. There are so many choices that it can be very confusing. Don't let this scare you.

One simple way to learn about and take care of your health needs is to know the three levels of prevention:

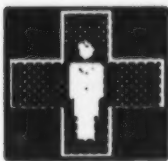
Primary prevention happens before there is a problem. This can include things like regular check-ups, children's shots, breast exams, and taking care of yourself by exercising, eating well, and learning about health. It could be pre-natal care for healthy babies, well-baby care, and regular dental check-ups. This first level of prevention is the foundation for lifelong health.

Secondary prevention happens when a health problem starts or when someone might be at risk for a problem because of personal or family history. This could include things like the start of allergies, small infections, or prevention work with children whose parents are hooked on alcohol or other drugs. Filling tooth cavities, getting yearly eye exams, helping to quit smoking, or testing for sickle cell anemia or hemophilia (if it's in the family) are all secondary prevention. The main thing about this level is early discovery and treatment of health problems so they don't get worse. Usually, the second level combines professional help with self-care.

Tertiary prevention is also called treatment. It usually starts with professional help for a problem you already have. This may be a heart attack, stroke, or mental or physical illness like diabetes, schizophrenia, or chronic pain. It could also be treatment for alcohol or other drug addiction, surgery or chemotherapy for cancer, or physical therapy after an injury or stroke. The main focus of this level is to:

- ▶ Cure the problem whenever possible,
- ▶ Keep the disease from getting worse,
- ▶ Provide recovery as much as possible, and
- ▶ Give the best care to reduce pain and improve comfort if recovery is not possible.

These three basic levels can help you with health care. Hopefully, it will help you use the health care system so you can get earlier, better, and calmer care.



You can get health care through individuals, groups, organizations, and facilities. In New York State, professionals must be licensed, registered, or certified to practice by the State Education Department, or people supervised by such regulated professionals. Also, health care organizations must live up to standards of the Health Department or other state agencies. Usually, you can get care from a doctor of medicine, osteopathy, or chiropractics. These days, other professionals such as nurse practitioners and health professionals' assistants often give much of the primary and even secondary levels of care.

The best thing you can do is find a health care professional that you **trust**. The main health professional you see is called your primary health care provider. This person takes care of your main health care needs. He or she helps you get information, answers questions, and gives advice or referrals to more specialized health care professionals.

Your primary health care provider will know you, your health care history, and your health needs, and be a main contact point with the health care system. Also, your family's health records will be kept in the same place so they're ready to be referred to right away. Hopefully, if you have a primary health care provider you will be treated more like a person and less like a "number."



Now let's talk about health professionals in private practice, ambulatory care facilities, and the hospital.

Health professionals can practice alone or in a group.



If your health professional practices alone, or solo, you will see the same health professional all the time. The setting is usually pleasant, friendly, and less businesslike. You may have to go somewhere else for laboratory services and your health professional may not be on call after normal business hours or during emergencies.



Health professionals in group practice work together and share staff, patients, records, and costs. They often offer 24-hour on-call services. They usually can hire more specialized people, buy more equipment, and offer more services and tests. They can also easily consult with each other and share records to give you more thorough care. On the other hand, you may feel like you're getting less personal care.

Be careful and ask lots of questions if your health professional refers you to other group members instead of to other professionals or facilities. Sometimes members of a group practice may leave after a couple of years, which will force you to either change health professionals or move to a new practice.

Ambulatory care facilities give day-to-day care. Most health professionals see patients in these types of places, which might be their offices or clinics. It's important for you to know and use these services in a way that helps you most.

Clinics can be independent (not part of another institution), part of a hospital, or privately owned by a business. They may be public, non-profit, or for profit. Your access, cost, and level of care will depend on who runs the clinic. For example, your care at a public clinic may depend on your income, or you may pay a lower rate at a non-profit clinic. Also, certain clinics may only provide certain services. A traditional clinic usually provides counseling, social work, and health education activities, as well as pre-natal care and other health care services. Some clinics will be attached to, or affiliated with, another clinic that gives dental care or eye care.

Health Maintenance Organizations or HMOs are usually found in or near larger cities. They are like clinics, but for members only. HMO members get prepaid services, which means they:

- ▶ Pay one set fee per month,
- ▶ Get direct care for many health services, like dental and eye care, and
- ▶ Go to hospitals or other facilities owned by or under contract with the HMO.

The HMO often has health professionals on salary and owns or has a contract with a hospital. In an Independent Practice Association or IPA, which is kind of like an HMO, you still get prepaid care, but you can choose your health care professionals from a list of approved providers. HMOs often provide more services, use a number of community providers, and stress prevention. However, there might be limits on care and high turnover among staff.



Hospitals are the most visible health care facilities. Not only are about 10% of Americans hospitalized each year, hospitals also provide jobs for a lot of people. Many hospitals are now adding ambulatory care or clinics and home health care. The four major types of hospitals are specialized hospitals, general non-profit community hospitals, government hospitals, and for-profit hospitals.

Specialized hospitals care for specific diseases or complex problems like cancer or physical rehabilitation.

General non-profit community hospitals are the most common type of hospital. They offer lots of services for both inpatients and outpatients.

Government hospitals are usually for special groups, like military veterans. They may be owned by local, state, or federal government agencies. The most common government hospital is the Veterans Administration system, which runs over 150 hospitals in the country.

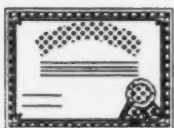
For-profit hospitals are becoming more popular these days. These hospitals usually provide good quality care, but may not offer very expensive services (such as burn care) or all the services you need.

Who you choose for main, emergency, or specialized care depends on:



- ✓ Where you live,
- ✓ How you will get there,
- ✓ When you can go,
- ✓ How much it costs and what insurance is accepted,
- ✓ Whether you like large or small facilities,
- ✓ Language,
- ✓ Reputation, and
- ✓ "Bedside manner" of the health care provider.

Some people choose a primary health care provider based on what kind of care they need most often. For instance, some women see their gynecologists most often, and use them for primary care. Others are happy with a team in a local clinic because they also get good pre-natal and pediatric care.



In choosing your primary health care provider, you will want someone with training and experience in dealing with your particular health needs. Look for posted degrees, licenses, and certificates in the office. Ask past patients or other health professionals you trust for recommendations. Use your own instincts when choosing a primary health care provider. If English is not your main language, be sure to ask if the provider speaks your native tongue.

*Please stop the tape at the beep and complete **Worksheet #2** on the next page.*

* * *

WORKSHEET #2

Put the proper letter in the correct space.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. _____ Primary prevention | a. Also known as treatment |
| 2. _____ Secondary prevention | b. The Veterans Administration runs some |
| 3. _____ Tertiary prevention | c. Takes care of your main health care needs |
| 4. _____ State Education Department | d. Provided by an HMO for one set fee per month |
| 5. _____ Primary care provider | e. Includes regular check-ups, exercise, and good nutrition |
| 6. _____ Ambulatory care facility | f. May not offer very expensive services |
| 7. _____ <u>Prepaid services</u> | g. Usually take care of people with complex diseases |
| 8. _____ Specialized hospital | h. Licenses or registers health professionals to practice in New York State |
| 9. _____ For-profit Hospital | i. Happens when a health problem starts |
| 10. _____ Government Hospital | j. Provides day-to-day care |

The answers to this worksheet are in the back of this workbook.

You should think about your future needs for emergency or special care. If you've already been to or like a certain hospital, your provider should deal with that hospital. If you don't have a favorite hospital, your primary health care provider can help you decide what hospital to go to.



In choosing a hospital, there are several things to consider, such as:

Your health professional's advice. It's better to choose a hospital where your health professional is so that he or she will be able to treat you there. You can go to the hospital emergency room or be treated as an outpatient before seeing your health professional. However, if you need to be admitted to the hospital, a health professional from the hospital staff will be assigned to you. If your own primary health care provider is a staff member, you will be in the hands of someone you know who knows you. Also, hospitals usually allow more highly-qualified health professionals to practice there. If a health professional practices in a good hospital, you can usually assume that he or she is good. Poor-quality health professionals have trouble being allowed to practice in good hospitals, while poor-quality hospitals have trouble getting good-quality health professionals.

Talk to your friends and family about the overall reputation of different hospitals. If someone you know works in a hospital, ask him or her about that hospital as well as other hospitals in your area. Hospitals affiliated with a medical school usually have high-quality care, but be aware that medical students, interns, and residents often observe or give care. Hospitals with residency programs usually have high-quality care.

The hospital's reputation for your specific need is as important as its overall reputation. Care is often better in a hospital where the specific procedure or service you require is performed a lot. So, choose a hospital according to your special needs.

Find out if your hospital accepts your health insurance coverage before you have an emergency. If the hospital doesn't participate in your insurance program, you will have to pay for all or at least part of your bill.

Size may also be a factor in your decision. Small hospitals are usually good at providing routine care. However, small hospitals may not be able to provide special care since they don't have the money or number of patients. Small, out-of-the-way hospitals may also not attract hospital staff.

Finally, you should personally inspect any hospital you are thinking about to be sure you feel comfortable with its staff, cleanliness, and the overall feel of it. Look also for accreditations, or certain standards to which a hospital must live up to. These are usually posted in the main lobby. Since accreditation is very easy to get, a hospital without it is suspicious.

Spending any length of time at a hospital is very serious and very expensive. Since there are so many health care options, it's wise to shop around.



In an emergency situation, you probably won't be able to shop around for health care. It's best to decide now where you will go if an accident happens. Examples of emergency health care are setting broken bones, counseling someone who attempted suicide, treating burns or infections, and stopping bleeding.

Choosing a provider for emergency care depends on where the emergency happens, as well as your type of health coverage. For example, if you belong to an HMO, you must get care or approval from an HMO health professional unless it is a life-or-death situation. If you don't, you may not get care or might be billed directly for the services.

Before an emergency occurs, find out what emergency care is available through your primary health care provider and what you should do in case of an emergency. Plan whether or not you might have to call an ambulance and know what number to call. You'll be upset during a crisis, so the fewer decisions you have to make in an emergency, the better.

*Please stop the tape at the beep and complete **Worksheet #3** on the next page.*

* * *

WORKSHEET #3

Use what you have just learned to make notes about the hospitals in your area. You may want to talk with a classmate or your teacher to help you answer the questions.

1. My special needs are:

2. These are the hospitals in my area:

3. Out of the hospitals in my area, my primary health care provider is affiliated with these:

4. Do any of the hospitals work with medical schools or have residency programs?

5. Which of the above hospitals accept my insurance?

If you need special care, there are many resources to meet your needs. Again, your primary health care provider, as well as friends and family, can help you sort out the options and give you advice. You might also try asking around. Lots of times people who have gone through the same thing can help you and lend support at the same time. Remember, though -- their experience won't always be the same as yours. They may offer well-intended but wrong advice. Use your own sense and that of your primary health care provider, and learn as much as you can about your condition.



Here are some examples of specialized care:

Specialist professionals have extra training in a certain area. Examples are surgeons, psychiatrists, nurse midwives and nurse practitioners, internists, pediatricians, and obstetricians. Besides basic training, these health professionals have either a special license or certification by the state or national board in a specialty area. Some specialist professionals take certain approaches. For example, chiropractors look at the central nervous system and the spine. Licensed physical therapists are another example. To find a specialist, start by looking in the yellow pages of the phone book, then contact your county medical society for more information.

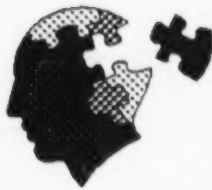
R One specialist who can be very helpful is your pharmacist, who can explain medications, side effects, and combinations to avoid with foods and other medications. Your pharmacist may also be able to substitute a generic version of your name-brand prescription, which costs you a lot less. Call around before choosing a pharmacist, then go to the same one each time. He or she will keep track of medications you are taking or have taken in the past.

More and more these days, people are getting health care at home. This either allows them to stay home and out of nursing homes longer, or to leave hospitals for home earlier. *Home health care* is usually provided by a registered professional nurse (RN), or a licensed practical nurse (LPN) or certified home health aide working under an RN. Home health care may be found through a hospital or public and private agencies like the Visiting Nurse Association. Home health care is very expensive. More insurance companies are starting to cover home care if ordered by a health professional.



If home health care isn't possible, there are many inpatient facilities which care for people who either can't care for themselves or who can't leave because of health needs. We usually think of nursing homes when we think of *long-term care*, though many different kinds of patients are served. Your choices depend on where you live. Your primary health care provider will know about standards, admission policies, and facility reputation, and can help you decide what might best meet your needs.

For patients with terminal illness, *hospice care* means both the physical and emotional health needs of the patient as well as the needs of his or her family. Hospice services may be inpatient, outpatient through home care visits, or both. They educate and support caregivers and those in the grieving process. While becoming more common, hospice care is not available everywhere.



Mental health services are operated by the state, community-based, or privately operated for profit. Treatment can be short- or long-term, and is available as outpatient, emergency, and inpatient. Services may include psychiatric treatment, nursing care, social work, and counseling.

When choosing a mental health facility, check professional and agency certifications and licenses, how much it costs, what they expect in patient involvement, and what types of treatment are used. For a list of New York State mental health offices, see Appendix A.



Help for alcohol and drug abuse is also very important. Because of the great interest and need in this area, we have written another module in this series called, *Alcohol and Other Drugs*. Please see that module for more information and resources about care for alcohol and drug problems.

At this point, please turn the tape over to Side B.

* * *

Besides professional health care, there are many organizations which provide information, research, and support for particular conditions or diseases. Many of these organizations are started by



patients and their families because of the gaps in health care those people needed. Groups like the American Cancer Society, Association for Retarded Citizens, March of Dimes, American Heart Association, and many, many others often lead change and improvement in the health care system. Their newsletters, pamphlets, and meetings can be a great help to people who are feeling alone.

In addition to the groups just mentioned, there are other support groups for various conditions, like the **Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Association** or **ALSA** for Lou Gehrig's Disease; **Reach to Recovery**, a program operated by the American Cancer Society for women facing breast surgery as a result of cancer; the **AIDS Council**; and support groups offered through the **Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of Greater New York**. Ask your primary health care provider if there is an organization that can help you.



Most of the support services we talked about are free, but we all know that health care is not. Health care costs have been growing out of control in the past ten years. One of the biggest problems in our country is how to provide good health care to **everyone**. Whether having major surgery or just basic immunization shots, paying for health care is becoming a nightmare for more and more people, especially those who don't have insurance.

With health care costs so high, how can we care for ourselves and our families? One way is to cut down on needless trips to the wrong health care provider. Having a primary health care provider to care for your everyday needs or refer you to a specialist is one important step in the right direction. There are other things we can do to keep our costs down, while keeping ourselves in the best health we can.

It's been said that 70% of hospital patients could have avoided going into the hospital if they had followed some simple preventive measures. The following steps can help stop illness or injury:

Healthy adults of age 16 - 35 should have medical check-ups once every two years. Different age groups, however, have different needs. Children should be examined once or twice a year, and adults age 35 - 40 should see a health professional once a year. Children should start seeing a dentist once or twice a year before starting school, and everyone should have a yearly eye exam by either an optometrist or an ophthalmologist. A simple way to keep track of check-ups is to write them on a calendar, maybe posted on the refrigerator.



Please stop the tape at the beep and see the chart on the next page for more check-up guidelines from the American Cancer Society.

* * *

Summary of American Cancer Society Recommendations for the Early Detection of Cancer in Asymptomatic People

Test or Procedure	Population		
	Sex	Age	Frequency
Sigmoidoscopy	M & F	50 and over	Every 3 to 5 years, based on advice of <u>physician</u> .
Stool Guaiac Slide Test	M & F	Over 50	Every year
Digital Rectal Examination	M & F	Over 40	Every year
Pap Test	F	All women who are, or who have been, sexually active, or have reached age 18, should have an annual Pap test and pelvic examination. After a woman has had 3 or more consecutive satisfactory normal annual examinations, the Pap test may be performed less frequently at the discretion of her <u>physician</u> .	
Pelvic Examination	F		
Endometrial Tissue Sample	F	At menopause, women at high risk*	At menopause
Breast Physical Examination	F	20 - 40 Over 40	Every 3 years Every year
Mammography	F	35 - 39 40 - 49 50 and over	Baseline Every 1 - 2 years Every year
Health Counseling & Cancer Checkup**	M & F	Over 20 Over 40	Every 3 years Every year
* History of infertility, obesity, failure to ovulate, abnormal uterine bleeding, or estrogen therapy. ** To include examination for cancers of the thyroid, testicles, prostate, ovaries, lymph nodes, oral region, and skin.			

Reprinted from Summary of Current Guidelines for the Cancer Related Checkup: Recommendations with permission from the *American Cancer Society, Inc.*

If you want to see a health professional only when absolutely necessary, you might have one check-up just to see what's "normal" for your body. However, if you have a chronic disease or condition like diabetes, you should see your health professional regularly. The key to prevention is knowing your body when it's normal. Once you know this, you'll be more aware of anything odd which may warn you to see a health professional. You may also save time and money if it's something you can care for yourself. You can keep track of your normal health by answering these questions every so often:

- ☐ *Are there any foods that make you feel sick or uncomfortable? Are you having physical reactions to any foods?*
- ☐ *What is your average weight? Do you gain or lose easily? Have you lost or gained ten or more pounds for no reason?*
- ☐ *How many hours of sleep do you need to feel rested? Do you feel tired or need more sleep than usual? Have you had trouble sleeping, waking often, or tossing and turning?*
- ☐ *When you are under stress, what parts of your body give you trouble?*
- ☐ *Do you catch every cold that comes along? Do you often have a mild cold? Have you been unable to get rid of a cold? Being able to fight colds or other illness is called resistance.*
- ☐ *Do you have allergies? If so, how do they affect you? Have you ever had a bad reaction to medicine?*

There are several self-examinations you should do regularly as part of your preventive habits. Here are some of the most important ones:

Exam	When	Who	Age
Breast Self - Examination	Every month	F & M	20 and over
Testicle Self - Examination	Every month	M	15 and over
Skin Self - Examination	Every month	F & M	18 and over

*Please stop the tape at the beep and see **Appendix B** for how to do the self-examinations, then use this information to complete **Worksheet #4** on the next page.*

* * *

WORKSHEET #4

Use the chart on the previous page and the appendices at the back of this workbook to help you fill in the blanks below.

1. Cancer of the _____ is one of the most common forms of cancer for men age 15 to 34.
2. The best time to do a testicular self-examination is _____.
3. Every year approximately _____ Americans are newly diagnosed with skin cancer.
4. The "ABCDs" of skin self examination are: A _____, B _____, C _____, and D _____.
5. _____ should perform breast self-examinations once every month.
6. Begin examining your breasts by making small _____ motions.

The answers to this worksheet are in the back of this workbook.

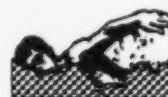
In addition to examining your body, you should get into other healthy habits to help prevent injury and disease.

A *wholesome diet* plays a key part in keeping you healthy. Don't overeat, and avoid foods that are high in saturated fat, cholesterol, salt, and sugar. Try to eat lots of different nutritious foods like whole-grain breads and cereals, fruits, and vegetables. For more information on nutrition, see the module in this series called *Nutrition: Eating for Better Health*.



Getting enough sleep is a basic need for your body to work its best, both physically and mentally. Most adults need about eight hours of sleep for good health. Remember, though, that each person is different and it's okay if you need more or less sleep to feel good. Try to stick with the same sleeping hours each night so you don't find yourself unable to sleep at all, which is called insomnia.

Exercise will help your health by making your heart and lungs work better. It's important to fit an exercise program into what you need and what you can do. An average, healthy adult should exercise at least three times per week for thirty minutes. If you plan to start an exercise program, be sure to consult your health professional first. For more information on physical fitness, see the module in this series called *Exercise: Benefits for Body and Mind*.



Alcohol and/or drug use should be kept at a minimum, if used at all. They can threaten health in many ways. Drunk driving and birth defects from drug and alcohol abuse are just two examples of the danger. If you use intravenous (IV) drugs, cut down your chance of contracting HIV, the virus which causes AIDS, by refusing to share needles with anyone and cleaning your needles with bleach. For more information on drug and alcohol abuse, see the module in this series called *Alcohol and Other Drugs*.

Safer sex, or not having sex at all, can reduce your chances of getting sexually-transmitted diseases, including AIDS. The safest sex is no sex at all, but if you are sexually active, use condoms. For more information on safer sex, please see the book, *HIV Education for Adult Literacy Students*.

Being safe at work, at home, and in the car is also important. For example, if all people who rode in the front seat of a car buckled their seatbelts, about 15,275 deaths and hundreds of thousands of injuries wouldn't happen¹. Allow extra time for trips and take a minute to catch your breath before continuing -- feeling rushed often causes accidents.



Improved dental practices have cut down on the number of people who have to wear dentures, or false teeth. Keep your smile healthy by brushing your teeth with a toothpaste recommended by the American Dental Association (check the toothpaste box), brushing and flossing **at least** once a day (morning, bedtime, and after meals is best), and seeing your dentist twice per year. The dental hygienist at your dentist's office can show you the best way to take care of your teeth, and will sometimes give you free samples.



A positive outlook on life will also help both your physical and mental health. Know what stresses you out or really bothers you, then make plans for relieving or getting rid of those stressful things. Sometimes it helps to get it all out by talking to a friend or support group. It's good to judge your outlook on life every day.

¹Statistics courtesy of the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee

We've already talked about the most common ways to treat and prevent disease and injury, but there are also prevention techniques that some people think are unusual. For example, many people believe that yoga, a relaxation method, is the main reason they stay healthy. You could also look into the connection between the foods you eat and how you feel. It might help you to take extra vitamins or completely avoid certain foods, or follow a special diet like a vegetarian. Sometimes food allergies can cause symptoms people wouldn't really connect to food, like being tired.

Be open to "new-age" nontraditional ways of preventive health care. Check out a local natural foods store or bookstore that has information on herbs, hypnosis, massage, nutritional supplements, and acupuncture or acupressure. Some stores have bulletin boards or newsletters, or may even know about classes you can sign up for.

Before getting any "alternative" health care, discuss it with your primary health care provider and find out if your insurance covers it. Sometimes you can help educate more "traditional" providers; other times your primary health care provider will already use less traditional approaches.

For most people, not doing too much or too little of anything, or practicing moderation, is the key. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," so take the time to decide what's best for you to get and stay healthy, and keep doing it!

Because of the rising cost of health care and the fact that so many Americans don't have insurance, it's becoming more and more important for people to stay in good health and prevent illness as well as to evaluate, get, and use health care coverage.

Though you could pay health care costs out of your own pocket, not many people can afford to. Most people look for insurance coverage which will pay for some level of care. For more detailed information, see the module *Health Insurance: The Facts You Need*. For now, the following section will describe some options.



Most health care coverage falls into two categories: coverage you get through your job, or coverage you get from the government. You may also buy insurance privately if you don't get it from either of these two sources, or to increase coverage from another source.

Not all employers offer the benefit of health insurance. Some do, but they may require a waiting period before coverage begins. Many employers offer some form of group coverage because they are buying for a large number of people and can get a lower rate from the insurance company. In this type of situation, employers may pay for all or part of the cost of coverage. Some will pay for the employee's coverage, and the employee will pay the rest of the cost for his or her family.

If you become unable to make decisions about health care for yourself, you have the right to arrange to have someone you trust make health care decisions for you, following your wishes. New York State's Health Care Proxy Law explains how you can make this arrangement.

Please stop the tape at the beep and take time to read Appendix C, "Questions and Answers About the Health Care Proxy Law." If you wish, fill in Worksheet #5, a health care proxy form, on the next page.

* * *

Health Care Proxy Form

1) I, _____ hereby appoint _____
(name, address and phone number)

_____ as my health care agent to make any and all health care decisions for me, except to the extent that I state otherwise. This proxy shall take effect when and if I become unable to make my own health care decisions.

2) Optional instructions: I direct my proxy to make health care decisions in accord with my wishes and limitations as stated below, or as he or she otherwise knows. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

(NOTE: Unless your agent knows your wishes about artificial nutrition and hydration [feeding tubes], your agent will not be allowed to make decisions about artificial nutrition and hydration. See the Questions & Answers section for samples of language you could use.)

3) Name of substitute or fill-in proxy if the person I appoint above is unable, unwilling or unavailable to act as my health care agent. (optional)

(name)

(Substitute's home address and telephone number)

4) Unless I revoke it, this proxy shall remain in effect indefinitely, or until the date or conditions stated below. This proxy shall expire (specific date or conditions, if desired): _____

5) _____
(Your Signature)

(Your Address)

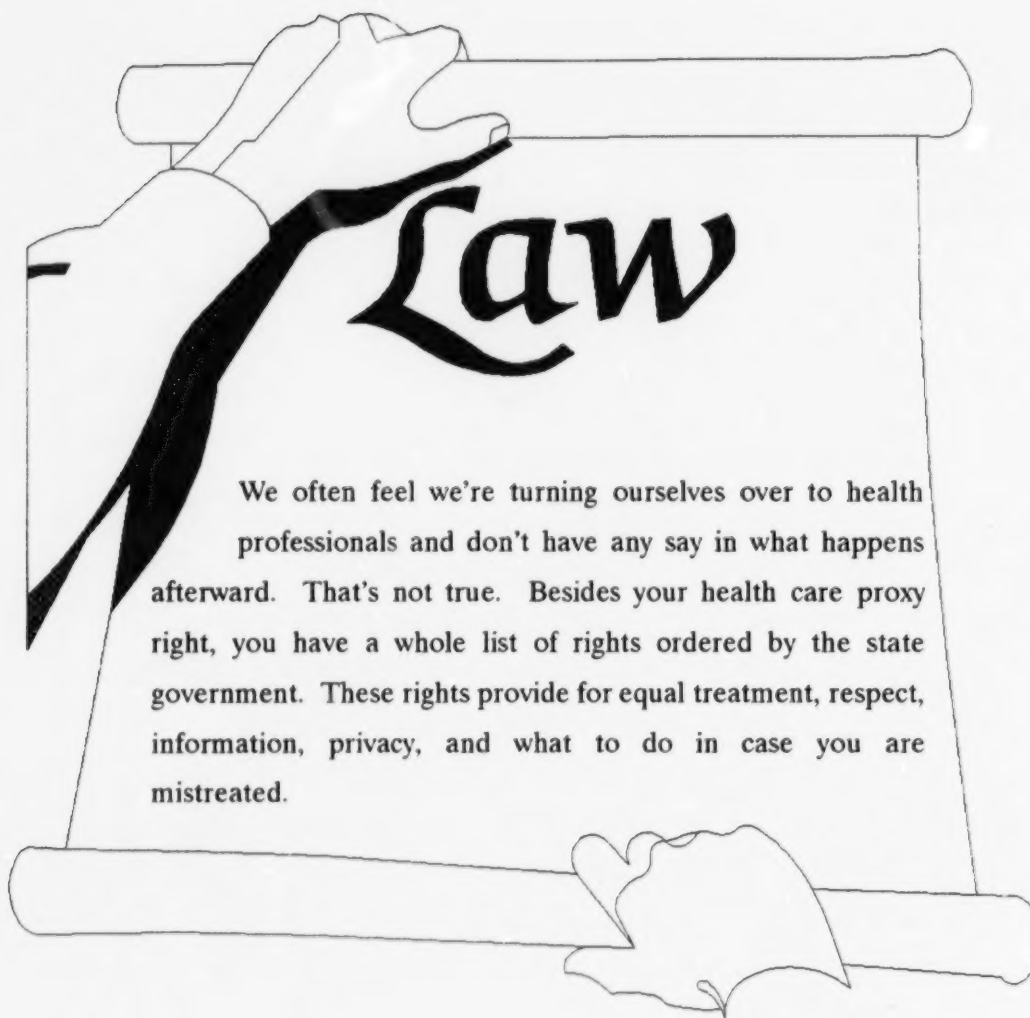
(Date)

Statement by witnesses (must be 18 or older)

I declare that the person who signed this document is personally known to me and appears to be of sound mind and acting of his or her own free will. He or she signed (or asked another to sign for him or her) this document in my presence.

Witness 1 _____ Address _____

Witness 2 _____ Address _____



We often feel we're turning ourselves over to health professionals and don't have any say in what happens afterward. That's not true. Besides your health care proxy right, you have a whole list of rights ordered by the state government. These rights provide for equal treatment, respect, information, privacy, and what to do in case you are mistreated.

*Please read along with **The Patient's Bill of Rights** on the next two pages.*

Health Care Resources: You Are the Consumer

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Patient's Bill of Rights

As a patient in a hospital in New York State, you have the right, consistent with law, to:

- 1) Understand and use these rights. If for any reason you do not understand or you need help, the hospital **MUST** provide assistance, including an interpreter.
- 2) Receive treatment without discrimination as to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or source of payment.
- 3) Receive considerate and respectful care in a clean and safe environment free of unnecessary restraints.
- 4) Receive emergency care if you need it.
- 5) Be informed of the name and position of the doctor who will be in charge of your care in the hospital.
- 6) Know the names, positions, and functions of any hospital staff involved in your care and refuse their treatment, examination, or observation.
- 7) A no-smoking room.
- 8) Receive complete information about your diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis.
- 9) Receive all the information that you need to give informed consent for any proposed procedure or treatment. This information shall include the possible risks and benefits of the procedure or treatment.
- 10) Receive all the information you need to give informed consent for an order not to resuscitate. You also have the right to designate an individual to give this consent for you if you are too ill to do so.
- 11) Refuse treatment and be told what effect this may have on your health.
- 12) Refuse to take part in research. In deciding whether or not to participate, you have the right to a full explanation.
- 13) Privacy while in the hospital and confidentiality of all information and records regarding your care.

Patient's Bill of Rights (continued)

- 14) Participate in all decisions about your treatment and discharge from the hospital. The hospital must provide you with a written discharge plan and written description of how you can appeal your discharge.
- 15) Review your medical record without charge. You also have the right to obtain a copy of your medical record for which the hospital can charge a reasonable fee. You cannot be denied a copy solely because you cannot afford to pay.
- 16) Receive an itemized bill and explanation of all charges.
- 17) Complain without fear of reprisals about the care and services you are receiving and to have the hospital respond to you and if you request it, a written response. If you are not satisfied with the hospital's response, you can complain to the New York State Health Department. The hospital must provide you with the Health Department's phone number.

Read and re-read the list of your rights before you get health care so you are clear and confident on getting what you have a right to. Dealing with a bureaucratic system can be scary since they're built to be big and to serve lots of people in the same ways. Though the health care system seems like one big mess, it's actually a bunch of little organizations and individuals. People in those organizations often feel as frustrated as you do because they realize that some things aren't well-organized or sensible or productive. Many have far more work than they can handle, and don't have time to enjoy the "people" part of their jobs. They can handle most simple cases by following routine procedures, but more complex cases and personal needs aren't handled unless **YOU** point it out.



Help things run more smoothly by anticipating where things might go wrong. Call to remind your provider to check on a lab result, or ask what specifically that medication is, why you're taking it, and what the possible side effects are. Remember, though, that people are people and even health professionals appreciate and respond to the same type of treatment you do. For example:

- ◆ Be respectful and courteous (and expect the same in return).
- ◆ Greet the provider by name.
- ◆ Make a personal connection, if appropriate, by either commenting on the weather or the busy day.
- ◆ Be prepared for the visit. It can be very helpful to talk things through with a friend or family member in advance, to get clear on your needs.
- ◆ Make a list of questions or information points to read or show to the provider. This is important for telephone calls too.

- ◆ Think about taking a friend or family member with you for emotional support, or to help you remember, understand, and follow through on instructions. Don't, however, scare your provider into thinking that your companion is there to judge or challenge him or her.
- ◆ Tell your provider that you will do whatever it takes to improve your health. This doesn't mean doing something you don't believe is right for you; it just means you're very interested and will do your part.
- ◆ Listen to the provider's instructions or comments all the way through. Interrupt only if you're confused.
- ◆ Repeat back, in your own words, what you were told to make sure you understand. Checking during the visit is easier on both you and your provider, and shows that you're serious about helping.
- ◆ Take notes if you need to, or ask your provider to give you written instructions to take home.
- ◆ Follow through on care you agree on with your provider, and tell him or her what works or any changes you've noticed. Don't promise to make changes in your life, then show up next time not having changed anything. If you don't agree on a treatment, say so up front so a different approach can be worked out.
- ◆ Help your provider and his or her staff recognize and reinforce quality care: express thanks as well as complaints. Tell them about especially good service.

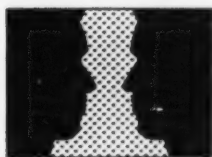
If you aren't satisfied with your care, try to sort out why:

Is your provider always disrespectful or unskilled?

Was the provider having a stressful day?

Does a provider seem unable to care for you for some reason?

You deserve quality care no matter what, but you should judge the reason for not getting it before you do anything about it. You can refuse care from a provider who seems consistently harmful or inappropriate, but if it happens once with a provider you trust, you might think about why the incident occurs and wait to see if something odd happens again.



If you aren't in immediate danger, take as little action as possible to get results. This keeps you and the provider from overreacting and helps to keep your relationship good. The first step would be to talk with your provider alone. It would not be helpful to talk to the provider's friend or co-worker.

If you don't get anywhere with the provider and still need to express your concern, the next step is to speak with that person's supervisor, making clear what was wrong and what you would like to change. At some point you may need to put your concerns in writing. Be brief and specific; give concrete examples of what was done or not done, and tell what should be done to correct the situation. Don't call names or insult people.

You might also look to the organization's board of directors; the government agency or institution which certifies the organization or individual; or the professional association to which the provider belongs for help. You may want to talk to a lawyer or other health care professionals to settle the situation.

There are tons of materials on health and health care resources at your local library, and librarians are there to help you find what you need. Your health care provider can help you find others depending on what you're interested in.



Local health departments, hospitals, HMOs, clinics, and other providers sometimes hold classes on certain topics, which are often free to the public. Check your local community calendar and billboard sections of your local newspaper for listings.

You can be successful in figuring out the health care system by breaking it down into small, understandable pieces. Take control of your own well-being by learning more about your body and how to keep it healthy. Next, shop around for a primary health care provider who will take care of your needs -- talk with your current provider, a school nurse, health teacher, or a friend or neighbor who's had good experiences with health care. Get on the road to taking charge of your health!

Congratulations on finishing this workbook! We hope that this information has been helpful to you. Remember that you are in control of your health care, and that control gives you both rights and responsibilities. If you would like to learn more about general health care or more about a certain problem, ask your teacher to help you get more information on health care resources.

APPENDIX A

State of New York Offices of Mental Health

Central Office:

44 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12229
(518) 474 - 2568

Regional Offices:

Central New York
545 Cedar Street
Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 428 - 4542

Hudson River
Hudson River Psychiatric Center
Branch B
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
(914) 452 - 1540

New York City
275 Seventh Avenue
16th Floor
New York, NY 10001
(212) 633 - 4303

Long Island
P.O. Box 600
West Brentwood, NY 11717
(516) 434 - 5311

Western New York
570 Forest Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14222
(716) 885 - 5014

APPENDIX B

Testicular Self Examination (TSE)

Cancer of the testes is one of the most common cancers in men 15 to 34 years of age. If discovered in the early stages, this cancer can be treated effectively. To detect testicular cancer early, it is best to complete a simple three-minute self-examination every month.

- ▶ The best time to do a TSE is after a warm bath or shower, when the scrotal skin is most relaxed.
- ▶ Roll each testicle gently between the thumb and fingers of both hands.
- ▶ If you feel any hard lumps or nodules, you should see a health professional immediately, who will make a diagnosis.

The symptoms of testicular cancer include a slight enlargement of one of the testes, a change in its consistency, and/or a dull ache in the lower abdomen and groin. This pain may be accompanied with a feeling of dragging and heaviness. Please also note that men who have an undescended or partially descended testicle are at a higher risk of developing testicular cancer.

Courtesy of the American Cancer Society, Inc.

APPENDIX B (cont'd)

Skin Self Examination (SSE)

Every year approximately 450,000 Americans are newly diagnosed with skin cancer. Although very common, it is also the easiest to detect and can be treated successfully. In addition to avoiding prolonged exposure to the sun, a key preventive step is conducting monthly skin exams.

- ▶ The best time for a SSE is after a bath or shower.
- ▶ Use a full-length mirror or hand-held mirror so that you can check the moles, blemishes, and birthmarks on your entire body. You should look for the ABCDs of each mark:

Asymmetry - do both halves of the mark match each other?

Border Irregularity - are the edges of the mark ragged, notched, or blurred?

Color - is the coloring of the mark even? Are there many shades of color?

Diameter - is the size of the mark larger than 6 millimeters (about the size of a pencil eraser) across? Has there been a sudden or continuing increase in the size?

You should also be attentive to any sore that does not heal.

- ▶ Examine your body front and back, then right and left sides, arms raised.
- ▶ Bend elbows and look carefully at forearms and upper underarms and palms.



- ▶ Sit, if you're more comfortable, to look at the backs of your legs, and feet - including the spaces between the toes, and the soles of your feet.
- ▶ Examine the back of your neck and scalp. Use a mirror to help you see. Part hair and lift it to get a closer look.

Remember, if you conduct this examination regularly, you will know what is normal for your body. If you find something unusual or of question, be sure to consult a health professional immediately.

Courtesy of the American Cancer Society, Inc.

APPENDIX B (cont'd)

Breast Self-Examination (BSE)

With improved technology and procedures, the risk of breast cancer has been somewhat diminished. However, this type of cancer is still life-threatening, and steps for preventing it should be adhered to regularly. For women, these steps include mammograms, clinical examinations, and self-examinations, depending on age. Since men can also get breast cancer, they too should perform monthly breast examinations on themselves.

Step 1. Inspection: in front of a well-lit mirror, look at your breast. Turn from side to side as you are looking.

First, you should stand with your arms relaxed at your sides to look for:

- any change in the size and shape of the breast,
- puckering or dimpling of the skin,
- change in the nipple, or in the direction of the nipple,
- drainage.

Next, stand with your arms held over your head. Check to see if breasts move up and down together. Lift your breasts to look for sores or dimpling.

Now stand with your hands on your hips, and press in to tighten your chest muscles. Turn from side to side to view all areas of your breast. Note any dimpling or puckering of the skin.



APPENDIX B (cont'd)

Step 2. Palpation or Feeling: use the flat surface or fat pads of the 3 middle fingers to conduct this exam.

To check your right breast, put your right hand behind your head, and press firmly on the breast using small circular motions. Begin by making a circle around the outer area of the breast, and gradually move toward the nipple by making smaller and smaller circles. Reverse for the left breast.

You should also examine your underarm area with your arm held loosely at your side. Cup the fingers of the opposite hand and insert them high into the underarm area. Draw fingers down slowly, pressing in a circular pattern and covering all areas. Do both underarms.

You may find it easier to do this examination in the shower or bath or even lying down. It is important, using any of these exams, to note changes from your last exam and report them to your health professional.

Courtesy of the American Cancer Society, Inc.

APPENDIX C

Health Care Proxy

The following pages are from a New York State Department of Health publication entitled "Appointing Your Health Care Agent - New York State's Proxy Law." (1991) They are reprinted as formatted by the office of Assemblyman Ron Canestrari.

Questions & Answers About the Health Care Proxy Law

What is a Health Care Proxy?

The Health Care Proxy Law lets you appoint someone to make decisions about medical treatment in the event you can't decide for yourself — including decisions to remove or continue life-sustaining treatment. You can appoint someone — often a family member or close friend — by completing a Health Care Proxy.

The person you select is known as your health care agent. You can give him or her as little or as much authority as you want. The health care agent can decide about all or only specific health care treatments. "Health care" means any treatment, service or procedure to diagnose or treat your physical or mental condition.

Hospitals, doctors, and other health care providers must follow your agent's decisions as if they were your own. To ensure doctors carry out your health care wishes, you can give your agent instructions that he or she must follow. The agent can also decide how your wishes apply as your medical condition changes.

Why should I choose a health care agent? If you become too sick to make health care decisions, someone must decide for you. Doctors often look to family members for guidance.

But family members aren't allowed to stop treatment when there isn't a living will or other proof that it's what you would choose. The health care proxy remedies this, letting you control your medical treatment by:

- choosing one person — even a non-family member if you feel it's best — to make decisions for you;
- avoiding conflict or confusion and ensuring your wishes are correctly carried out; and
- giving your agent the power to stop treatment when he or she decides it's what you would want or what is best for you under the circumstances.

When would my agent make treatment decisions? After your doctor decides you are unable to make your own health care decisions, your agent would become involved. As long as you can make decisions for yourself, you have the right to do so.

What decisions can my health care agent make? Unless you limit your agent's authority, he or she can make any treatment decisions you could make. Your agent can:

- agree that you should receive treatment;

■ choose among different treatments; and

■ decide that treatments should not be provided, in accord with your wishes and interests.

Your agent must be aware of your wishes about artificial nutrition and hydration (nourishment and water provided by feeding tubes), or he or she will not be able to make these decisions.

How will my health care agent make decisions? Your agent must follow your oral and written instructions, as well as your moral and religious beliefs. Written instructions can be put on the proxy form. For example, you could say:

- If I become terminally ill, I do/don't want to receive the following treatments . . .
- If I'm in a coma or unconscious, with no hope of recovery, then I do/don't want . . .
- If I have brain damage or a brain disease making me unable to recognize people or speak — and there is no hope my condition will improve — I do/don't want . . .

Examples of some medical treat-

ments you may wish to give instructions on are listed below. You may wish to talk about other treatments.

- artificial respiration
- artificial nutrition & hydration (food & water by a feeding tube)
- cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- antipsychotic medication
- electric shock therapy
- antibiotics
- psychosurgery
- dialysis
- transplantation
- blood transfusions
- abortion
- sterilization

If your wishes or beliefs are unknown, your agent is legally required to act in your best interest.

Who will obey my agent? All hospitals, doctors, and other health care facilities are legally required to follow your agent's decisions. If a hospital objects to some treatment options (such as removing certain treatments) they must tell you or your agent in advance.

Otherwise, health care providers will make treatment decisions following your health care proxy instructions. Any instructions written on your proxy form will be used as a guide.

How can I appoint a health care agent? All competent adults can appoint a health care agent by signing a form called a Health Care Proxy.

Talk about choosing an agent with your family and close friends. Discuss this form with your agent, doctor or health care professional before signing. This will help you understand decisions that may be made for you. If you select a doctor, he or she may have to choose between acting as your agent or as your attending physician. A physician cannot do both at the same time.

You can appoint an alternate agent in the event your health care agent isn't available — or is unable to act when decisions must be made. You don't need a lawyer, just two adult witnesses. You can use the form printed here if you wish.

For patients or residents of a hospital, nursing home or mental hygiene facility, special restrictions apply when naming someone as your agent who works for that facility. Ask the facility staff to explain those restrictions.

What if I change my mind about my agent or treatment instructions? Just fill out a new form and destroy the old form.

A Health Care Proxy is valid indefinitely unless you revoke it, set an expiration date or other conditions for

its expiration. This section is optional and should only be filled in if you want the health care proxy to expire on a specified date or if certain events occur. If your spouse is your agent — and you get divorced or legally separated — the proxy is automatically cancelled.

Can my health care agent be sued for decisions made on my behalf? No. Your agent will not be liable for treatment decisions made in good faith. As your agent, he or she can't be held liable for your health care costs.

Is a health care proxy the same as a living will? No. A "living will" provides specific instructions about health care treatment. It's generally used to declare wishes to refuse life-sustaining treatment under certain circumstances.

Filling out the proxy form. Two witnesses at least 18 years old must sign your proxy. The agent or alternate agent can't sign as a witness.

Where should I keep my proxy? Give a copy to your agent, doctor and other family members or close friends you want to have it. Keep a copy with your important papers.

GLOSSARY

<i>accreditation</i>	formal approval given to a hospital or other health care facility for meeting voluntary standards of quality
<i>affiliated</i>	connected or associated
<i>chiropractor</i>	doctor and physician of chiropractic medicine; looks at health through the spine and central nervous system without using drugs
<i>dental hygienist</i>	professional who, under the supervision of a dentist, promotes healthy teeth and gums by teaching patients self-care in cleaning teeth
<i>doctor</i>	often considered the same as physician or medical doctor; anyone who has any doctoral academic degree either in medicine, nursing, history or any field. In health care, it is very important to see the provider's New York State license and registration as a health care professional.
<i>generic</i>	a drug without a registered trademark
<i>gynecologist</i>	doctor of medicine who specializes in women's health care, focusing on reproduction
<i>holistic</i>	taking into account the whole being, with nothing removed
<i>insomnia</i>	not being able to sleep
<i>internist</i>	doctor of medicine who specializes in "internal medicine," evaluating and treating conditions of internal organ systems
<i>moderation</i>	keeping within reasonable limits, not too much or too little

<i>nurse practitioner</i>	registered professional nurse with extra training and a license for advanced practice, such as writing prescriptions
<i>obstetrician</i>	physician who specializes in the care of pregnant women and in delivering babies
<i>ophthalmologist</i>	medical doctor who specializes in eye care
<i>optometrist</i>	doctor of optometry who examines eyes and prescribes glasses or contact lenses
<i>Patients's Bill of Rights</i>	guarantees rights to consumers of health care, such as refusing care or seeking a second opinion
<i>pediatrician</i>	physician who specializes in the care of children
<i>pharmacist</i>	a person who specializes in preparing and giving out medicine
<i>physician</i>	doctors who have degrees <u>and</u> licenses to provide care in allopathic medicine (medical, MD), osteopathic medicine (DO), or chiropractic medicine (DC)
<i>pre-natal care</i>	health assessment, care, and education to promote healthy babies and healthy mothers during pregnancy and in getting ready for birth
<i>prepaid services</i>	medical services which are paid for in advance so that the client only pays a small co-payment when they get health care
<i>primary health care provider</i>	the health care professional or team that is your main source of care, who can help you get other needed health services and referrals
<i>resistance</i>	being able to ward off disease

WORKSHEET #2 - ANSWERS

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|----|--|
| 1. <u>e</u> | Primary prevention | a. | Also known as treatment |
| 2. <u>i</u> | Secondary prevention | b. | The Veterans Administration runs some |
| 3. <u>a</u> | Tertiary prevention | c. | Takes care of your main health care needs |
| 4. <u>h</u> | State Education Dept. | d. | Provided by an HMO for one set fee per month |
| 5. <u>c</u> | Primary care provider | e. | Includes regular check-ups, exercise, and good nutrition |
| 6. <u>j</u> | Ambulatory care facility | f. | May not offer very expensive services |
| 7. <u>d</u> | Prepaid services | g. | Usually take care of people with complex diseases |
| 8. <u>g</u> | Specialized hospital | h. | Licenses or registers health professionals to practice in New York State |
| 9. <u>f</u> | For-profit Hospital | i. | Happens when a health problem starts |
| 10. <u>b</u> | Government Hospital | j. | Provides day-to-day care |

WORKSHEET #4 - ANSWERS

1. Cancer of the testes is one of the most common forms of cancer for men age 15 to 34.
2. The best time to do a testicular self-examination is after a warm bath or shower.
3. Every year approximately 450,000 Americans are newly diagnosed with skin cancer.
4. The "ABCDs" of skin self examination are: Asymmetry, Border irregularity, Color, and Diameter.
5. Females and males age 20 and over should perform breast self-examinations once every month.
6. Begin examining your breasts by making small circular motions.



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Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



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(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

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Author(s): <i>Hudson River Center for Program Development, Inc.</i>	
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